

1 Thessalonians

First Thessalonians encourages a young, pressured church with gratitude, pastoral defense, holiness, mutual encouragement, and hope for believers who have died.



Interpretive reconstruction. This is a visual reconstruction of a meeting described only through the letter's travel references.

Date · Confidence: Established

c. AD 50–51

The exact sequence of Athens, Corinth, and Timothy's movements is reconstructed from Acts and the letter.

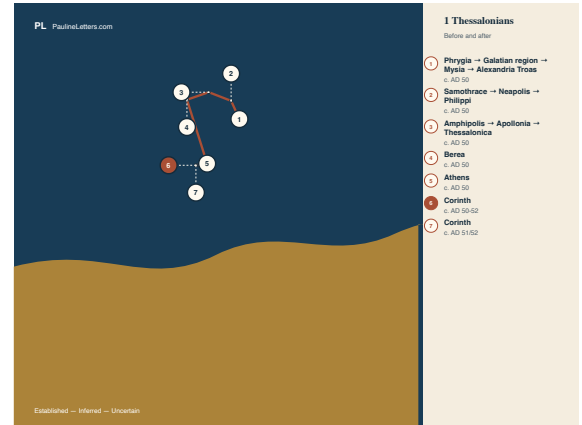
Place · Confidence: Established

Corinth

The exact sequence of Athens, Corinth, and Timothy's movements is reconstructed from Acts and the letter.

Before and after

- 1 **c. AD 50** Forbidden by the Spirit in Asia; the Macedonian vision at Troas; the "we" sections begin.
Phrygia → Galatian region → Mysia → Alexandria Troas · Established
- 2 **c. AD 50** Sails Troas → Samothrace → Neapolis, then inland to Philippi: Lydia believes; the slave girl freed; beaten and jailed; the jailer saved; the church founded.
Samothrace → Neapolis → Philippi · Established
- 3 **c. AD 50** Three Sabbaths reasoning in Thessalonica; some believe; Jason dragged before officials.
Amphipolis → Apollonia → Thessalonica · Established
- 4 **c. AD 50** The noble Bereans examine the Scriptures daily; opponents arrive; Paul sent on.
Berea · Established
- 5 **c. AD 50** The Areopagus address: the unknown God, repentance, resurrection.
Athens · Established
- 6 **c. AD 50–52** Meets Aquila and Priscilla; reasons in the synagogue; stays eighteen months.
Corinth · Established
- 7 **c. AD 51/52** Brought before Gallio, who dismisses the case — the chronological anchor.
Corinth · Established



What the text establishes

Established

First Thessalonians encourages a young, pressured church with gratitude, pastoral defense, holiness, mutual encouragement, and hope for believers who have died.

The audience is a recently formed church in Thessalonica facing opposition and learning how to live in hope.

Leading reconstruction

Corinth around AD 50–51 is a strong reconstruction, after Timothy returned with news from Thessalonica during the second journey.

The exact sequence of Athens, Corinth, and Timothy's movements is reconstructed from Acts and the letter.

Other credible readings

Some chronologies place the letter slightly earlier or later during Paul's Corinthian stay while retaining the same second-journey setting.

A ten-minute teaching plan

1. First Thessalonians encourages a young, pressured church with gratitude, pastoral defense, holiness, mutual encouragement, and hope for believers who have died.
2. The letter belongs after the founding mission in Thessalonica and before the Gallio hearing at Corinth, with Second Thessalonians traditionally placed nearby.
3. Corinth around AD 50–51 is a strong reconstruction, after Timothy returned with news from Thessalonica during the second journey.
4. Some chronologies place the letter slightly earlier or later during Paul's Corinthian stay while retaining the same second-journey setting.

Primary texts

Romans through Philemon, World English Bible (public domain).

Acts 7–28, World English Bible (public domain).

Sources

Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Doubleday, 1997). — Chapter 18, "First Letter to the Thessalonians," "General Analysis of the Message"
Brown surveys the letter's argument and pastoral occasion.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford University Press, 1996). — Chapter 1, "The Chronological Framework," "The Evidence from the Pauline Letters" and "The Evidence from the Acts of the Apostles"

Murphy-O'Connor explains why chronology must weigh the letters and Acts without treating either as a complete timetable.

Scripture references only; no protected Scripture body is included.

<https://paulineletters.com/explore/1-thessalonians>

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